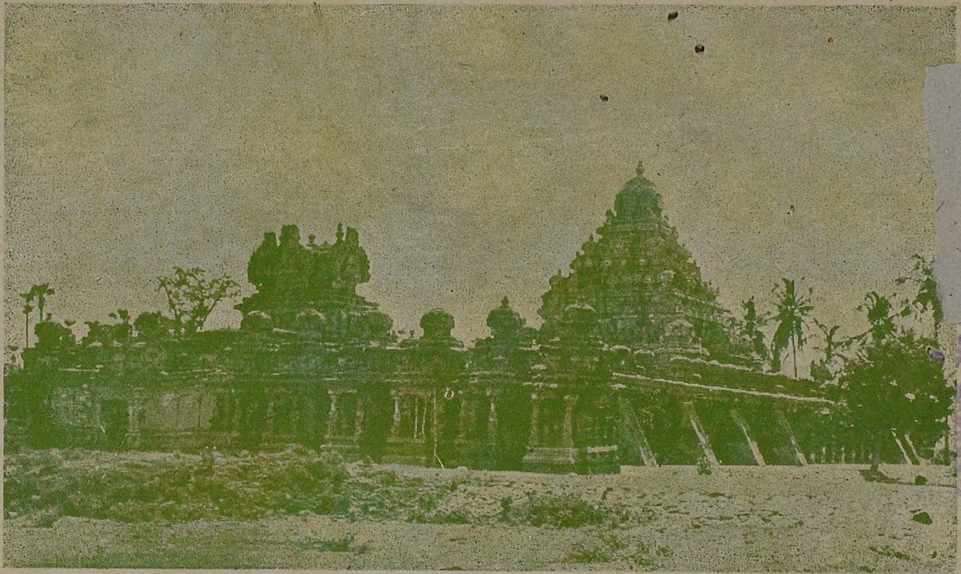

KAILASANATHA

The Kailasanatha temple

(A GUIDE)

By

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Kailasanatha Temple

Introduction :

The Rājasimhesvara temple, now known as the Kailāsanātha, is the most ancient to survive in the city of Kanchi. All earlier temples there have disappeared due to various causes like the passage of time and the effect of war.

The Rājasimhesvara temple was built in the first quarter of the eighth century A D. by the illustrious Pallava king, Rājasimha after whom it was named Rājasimhesvara. The temple is remarkable for its architectural beauty and wealth of sculptures. It was the main source of inspiration for the Chalukyan temple of Virupāksha at Pattadakkal and the celebrated Kailāsa temple of Ellora

The temple has luckily been spared alterations. An archaic conservation carried out at the beginning of this century, however, conceals the beauty of its sculptures underneath a coat of lime wash. Set against a typical South Indian scenery of green paddy fields and coconut groves, the Rājasimhesvara is the loveliest of all the temples in this ancient city.

Kanchi :

Kanchi itself was considered the most beautiful city of

India in ancient times. Among cities Kanchi ranks first, says an ancient saying. Kanchi had a glorious past and till the rise of Madras to prominence in the 18th century, it was the outstanding city in the northern part of Tamilnad. It was a well established city long before Asoka Maurya. Asoka is said to have erected a stupa in the city in the third century B C Kanchi was under the rule of Karikāla, the celebrated Chola of the Sangam age, in the first century B.C. Tondaimān Ilamtiraiyan, a descendant of the Chola line, held sway over Tondaimandalam (comprising modern Madras, Chingleput and parts of North Arcot and South Arcot districts) with Kanchi as his capital. Graphic descriptions of the city occur in Tamil classics of the Sangam age (third century B.C to second century A.D.)

From the very beginning Kanchi was an important centre of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism alike. Bodhidharma, a prince of Kanchi who lived in the early half of the sixth century A.D. founded the *Dhyana marga* school of Buddhism. He went to China in 520 AD, and converted the Chinese king Wu-ti of the Lyang dynasty to Buddhism and founded Chang Buddhism. The Chinese worshipped him as Tamo and erected temples for him Bodhidharma later visited Japan and founded Zen Buddhism

An important educational institution, which imparted higher learning in various systems of Indian philosophies, medicine, warfare and other subjects, was located in

Kanchi. This attracted many able scholars in the country and was much revered. It played an important role in the field of education for over five hundred years.

The Pallavas:

The Pallavas, a dynasty known for their love of arts and letters, made Kanchi their capital by about 275 A.D. It continued to be the seat of their power for nearly six hundred years till 875 A.D. Beginning as rulers of a small area, the Pallavas became great emperors, wielding sway over a vast area, which included a considerable part of the Telugu and Kannada regions.

The glorious era of the Pallavas begins with Simhavishnu (570 A.D), whose illustrious son Mahendra, an accompolished artist and poet, ushered in a new era of art and architecture by excavating cave temples in various parts of his kingdom. His son Narasimhavarman 1, a remarkable warrior, extended the empire by inflicting defeats on all his enemies, especially the Badami Chalukyas, who were the "natural" opponents of the Pallavas. It was during his reign that the Chinese pilgrim, Huen-tsang visited Kanchi.

The following observation's of Huen-tsang about the Pallava country and Kanchi are of interest :-

"The Ta-lo-p'i-t'u country was about 6,000 *Li* in circuit and its capital *KAN-CHIH-PU-LO* was above thirty *Li* in circuit. The region had a rich fertile soil. It

abounded in fruits and flowers and yielded precious substances. The people were courageous, thoroughly trustworthy, and public-spirited, and they esteemed great learning; in their written and spoken language they differed from "Mid-India" There were more than 100 Buddhist monasteries with above 10,000 Brethren all of the Sthavira school The Deva Temples were above 80, and the majority belonged to the Digambaras. This country had been frequently visited by the Buddha, and King Asoka had erected topes at the various spots where the Buddha had preached and admitted members into his order. The capital was the birthplace of Dharmapala P'usa who was the eldest son of a high official of the city"

The reigns of Narasimhavarman's successors Mahendra II and Paramesvara I, were eventful. During the reign of the later, the city was lost for a brief spell to the Chalukya, Vikramāditya, but Paramesvara recovered it soon and drove back the enemy.

Rajasimha the builder :

The son and successor of Paramesvara I was Rājasimha, the builder of the Rājasimhesvara. Known variously as Rājasimha, Narasimha 1 and Atyantakāma, this king came to the throne in 700 A.D. and ruled till 728 A.D. He retained the vast empire bequeathed to him and maintained active maritime contacts with the Far East and is credited with having ruled overseas territories like

the Laccadive Islands.

Rājasimha was born of "the line of Pallava princes who were pious, who destroyed the excessively great pride of the Kali age, who spoke the truth, who were profound, whose minds knew how to practise the *trivarga*, who assiduously honoured the aged, who forcibly subdued lust and the other internal foes, who excelled in the knowledge of weapons, who were firm, mighty and endowed with polity and modesty."

Of his birth and attainment, his inscription at the Kailāsanātha temple states :–

"Just as Guha, also called Subrahmanya or Kumāra, took birth from the supreme lord Siva, the destroyer of the warlike demon Pura, thus from the supreme lord Agradaṇḍa, who was born in the race of the Pallavas, the destroyer of the city of Ranarasika, there took birth a very pious prince Subrahmanyah, Kumārah, the illustrious Atyantakāma, the chief of the Pallavas, who crushed the multitude of his foes by his power, whose great statesmanship was well-known and who had got rid of all impurity by walking in the path of the Saiva doctrine.

"Like Manmatha (Kāma) he charmed refined women in secret, like Vāsava (Indra), he constantly protected those who frequented the path of the three vedas, like Mādhava (Vishnu) he tore the hearts of the enemies of sages, twiceborn and gods; and like

Vittada (Kuvera) he gratified good people with abundant wealth."

"May Ranajaya be victorious for a long time, who humbled those princes who were puffed up with the pride of abundant prosperity, which they had acquired by polity and prowess, depriving them of their intelligence in the mere space of knitting his brows, and who, like Purushottama (Vishnu) was born to rescue from the ocean of sin the sinking people, who were swallowed by the horrid monster (called) the Kali age!"

Rājasimha loved all that was best in this world and the other. He has left monuments at various places, at Kanchi, Mamallapuram, Saluvankuppam, Thirupporur, Vayalur and Panamalai, where his inscriptions are found. A recent study of the Pallava inscriptions has established that all the monuments of Mamallapuram were his creations He has erected varieties of monoliths, cave and structural temples, sculptures, paintings and epigraphs, which show his love of art and variety and so he assumed the title of Kalāsamudrah (Ocean of arts)

A great devotee of Lord Siva, he was ever fond of worshipping the lotus feet of Sambhu. His titles like *Isanacharana*, *Devadeva bhakta*, *Sivachudamani*, *Parama mahesvara* etc, show his intense and affectionate love for Lord Siva And yet he was no religious fanatic.

He styled himself a great devotee of Vishnu and a great devotee of Subrahmanya (Parama Bhāgavata and Parama Brahmanya). In his inscription at the Kailāsa-nātha temple of Kanchi, it is mentioned that he mastered the various branches of Saiva Sidhanta doctrine and following in its footsteps, cleansed himself of all ignorance.

Rājasimha loved his subjects so passionately that even a slight suffering among the weaker section of his subjects made him tremble. His sole aim was to give the greatest happiness to his subjects and uphold the path of righteousness. His titles engraved on the row of cells of the enclosure and numbering over 300, show his inner urge and varied personality. The monuments of Mamallapuram and the Kailāsanātha temple of Kanchi, are the external manifestations of all that he loved and cherished during his life.

Two of his queens, Rangapatāka and Vilāsavati are mentioned in his inscriptions His son Mahendra III, succeeded him under the title of Paramesvara.

The Temple :

At the eastern end of the temple area, placed on a raised platform, is an image of Nandi, Lord Siva's mount. Lion pillars have survived at the corners. Originally these pillars supported a mandapa (a pavilion) the superstructure of which has fallen down Nandi must be placed in

front of a Siva shrine to suit ritual needs.

The outer shrines :

In line with the entrance are eight small shrines. arranged in a row, two to the south, and six to the north, of the entrance. These are little temples, built either by the king himself or his queens. They bear a close resemblance to each other. All of them face east and are built on raised platforms of equal height with ornamental mouldings. On the platform is the shrine chamber preceded by a porch. All of them enshrine Siva in the form of prismatic lingas inside the sanctums. At the back wall of the sanctum, Siva is portrayed with his consort, Uma, and child Skanda in sculpture. This form is known as Somaskanda Deva. Except the eastern opening, the other three sides are decorated with sculptures depicting various aspects of Siva such as Somāskanda, Lingodhbhava, Kālāri, Yogamurti, Samhāratāndava, Gajasamhāra, Tripurasamhāra, Dakshināmurti, Kshetrapāla Harihara and Ūrdhvatāndava. The disposition of the sculptures is of great interest. Originally the sculptures were covered with a thin film of plaster and painted. The sandstone used in the construction of these shrines has weathered due to passage of time. All the shrines are two storeyed, topped by a sikhara, the final element of which has fallen down in some cases

The shrine on the extreme south, i.e., the first one as one enters, was probably not completed as the carvings

are unfinished. The one immediately to the north of the entrance has a label inscription reading *Nityavinitesvara grha*, i.e. the Siva temple of Nityavinita. Nityavinita is a title of king Rājasimha. The third and the fifth temples on the north were built by the queens of Rājasimha, as they bear their inscriptions. The fifth one was built by Rangapatāka, the chief queen of Rājasimha.

A small wagon roofed ornament crowns the entrance to the temple. Entrance towers (*gopuras*) were small in the eight century A.D. They rose to very great heights as their importance grew through the centuries, and are now the dominating features of the Tamil landscape.

The front temple :

At the entrance stands a temple with a flight of steps leading to the sanctum. This was built by Mahendra Varman III, Rājasimha's son. This temple in front was built at the same time as the main temple. On the basement of the shrine is an inscription in Sanskrit, in grantha characters, recording the erection of the shrine. On the parapets of the steps are label inscriptions giving the name of the temple as *Mahendravarmesvaragrham* i.e. the Siva temple of Mahendravarman.

In the centre of the sanctum, Siva is enshrined as a fluted linga. On the back wall, a sculpture of Somāskanda is installed On the south wall of the front hall here is a fine image of Siva in the Bhikshātana form,

standing over eight feet high. On the northern wall is a thrilling pose of dancing Siva, performing the *Samhara Tandava*, i.e., the dance of destruction.

This shrine is encased by enclosure walls on the east, south and north. On all the three walls there are sculptural representations of deities, all facing the inner shrine.

The main temple :

The main temple has three main components, the prakara outer corridor with the enclosure wall running around, the main shrine with the sanctum tower and the pillared mandapa in front. Originally the pillared hall in the front was not connected to the main shrine, but stood apart from it. It was in the 17th century that the two were connected.

The enclosure :

The enclosure had entrances at the east and the west The western entrance was walled up in recent times, probably for reasons of safety. The eastern entrance has been divided into two passages by the erection of the Mahendravarmesvara temple in the centre.

The enclosure walls carry all around a row of cells projecting from the back wall. These cell shrines are square in shape and have the shrine chambers on raised basements, ornamented with mouldings. The

shrine chamber is preceded by a small pavilion like structure, supported by pillars with either seated lions or mythical figures called *Vyalas*. Over these, the towers rise up. In between these towers are images of Nandi on the wall. At the four corners are seen elephants and lions.

The shrine chambers on the east and the west face the inner side of the temple, and carry the Somās-kanda panels on the back wall.

The row of cells on the south and north walls has its shrine chambers opened to the east. The approach to these is narrow. The inner walls of these shrines are devoid of sculptures, but were originally plastered and painted. There are strong grounds to suppose that the back wall of all the shrine chambers probably had the Somāskanda motif painted on them. At least at one place, a painting representing this aspect has survived.

There are two series of sculptures around the enclosure consisting of those on the projecting cells all around and those on the enclosure wall itself, in between the cells. The identification of all the sculptures is detailed elsewhere. These sculptures stand for certain architectural principles. A summary of traditional architecture is given seperately.

Sculptures in the row of cells:

As mentioned earlier, the cells on the east and the west carry Somāskanda panels. The cells on the south carry sculptures of subsidiary deities, some forms of Vishnu and the destroying aspects of Siva. The cells in the northern enclosure carry benign aspects of Siva. In Siva temples, Brahma and Vishnu images occupy special positions. So a Brahma image is shown in this temple in a rectangular cell in the southern enclosure, in line with the central line of the main sanctum, while correspondingly on the north is an image of Vishnu in a rectangular cell.

The subsidiary deities, represented from the south-east portion of the enclosure, are Ganesa, Durga, Subrahmanya and Devi, followed by a few aspects of Vishnu. Then the destructive aspects of Siva are portrayed. Towards the south-west are shown Jyeshta, Kāli, Mātrganas (Saptamātas) and Agastya. In the north-west of the enclosure is a panel depicting eleven Rudras, while in the north-east is a sculpture in the round, depicting Candikesvara, the steward of Siva temples. These subsidiary deities, including the bull stationed to the east of the temple constitute the full complement of the *Parivara devatas* of a Siva temple.

Sculptures on the walls of the enclosure:

The sculptures on the walls of the enclosure may be divided into many categories. One series represents

Goddess Parvati seated under a tree, holding the musical instrument of the Vina, and surrounded by attendants, elephants, buffaloes or antelopes. In some panels, a bearded sage is represented in front of the Devi.

The second series of panels represents the 32 *pada devatas* (the marginal divinities who constitute the *Vastu purushamandala*). These images are generally distributed over the four directions in equal numbers. However, since an entrance has to be provided at the east and as a temple has been added in the east, some marginal adjustments have been made in the distribution of these images The thirty-two deities include the eight *dikpalas* (Indra Agni, Yama, Niruriti, Varuna, Vayu, Soma and Isana) and other deities like Parjanya, and Pusha. It is possible to identify four deities by their attributes. Thus Agni seen in the north-east, which is his quarter, is represented with his hair shown as flames. Yama, the Lord of death is distinguished by his heavy club and is placed in the south. Soma, shown with a halo behind, occupies the northern direction, while Īsāna is seen on the north-east with his club. All the deities except Īsāna are shown with their consorts.

It is clear that the enclosure of this temple carries the full complement of both the *Parivara devatas* and the *Vastupada devatas*. This is the earliest surviving temple in the whole of India where the marginal deities and

also the subsidiary deities are portrayed fully in sculpture. This proves that the temple was carefully planned and laid out as per the agamic texts.

The front mandapa :

The mandapa in the front, supported on plain pillars is coeval with the main temple in age. The corner walls of the front mandapa carry sculptures, which are heavily plastered over. The pillars carry a number of inscriptions, ranging from the eight century to the 16th A.D. in Date.

The earliest inscription in this mandapa is of historic importance. It is in Kannada characters and was engraved by order of the Chalukya king, Vikramāditya II, who captured Kanchi probably within ten years of the construction of this temple. Vikramāditya came to Kanchi to avenge the defeat of his ancestors at the hands of the Pallavas. Kanchi was being ruled then by Nandivarman Pallavamalla. Vikramāditya captured Kanchi, but this great temple enchanted him. The conqueror was conquered! Vikramāditya admired the beauty of this temple and gifted gold to it. The Kannada inscription records the gift made by this great Chalukya ruler.

Vikramāditya took with him some of the best artists of Kanchi to Pattadakkal in his kingdom, where under the orders of his queen, Lokamādevi, was erected the temple of Virupāksha, which resembles the Kailāsanātha in many aspects.

The main shrine :

The main sanctum is reached by a flight of steps at the southern side of the connecting mandapa. This mandapa carries a number of fragmentary inscriptions of the Chola period on its floor and ceiling.

The main sanctum faces east. Inside the sanctum is Lord Rājasimhesvara, in the form of a prismatic linga in the centre. The linga, with 16 facets, is of a highly polished granite stone, over eight feet in height. On the back wall of the sanctum, well above the linga, is a Somāskanda panel. The main shrine is of two walls, an inner one encasing the sanctum, and then an outer one, leaving a narrow passage in between. The provision of two walls was intended for structural stability.

Sub-shrines:

The main shrine has seven sub-shrines at seven corners. These shrines are called *anga alayas* (limb shrines) The rear three face west and the other four east. The sub-shrines on the south-east and on the north-east corners carry sculptures of Siva performing the Samhāra Tāndava on the back wall. Devi, as Bhavāni, witnesses the dance on one side, while on the other are shown ganas and attendants playing musical instruments.

The sub-shrines on the north and on the south depict Somaskanda inside the shrine chamber with Siva flanked by Brahma and Vishnu on the back wall Uma and

Skanda are on the side walls. Nandi is portrayed Vigorously on the south wall.

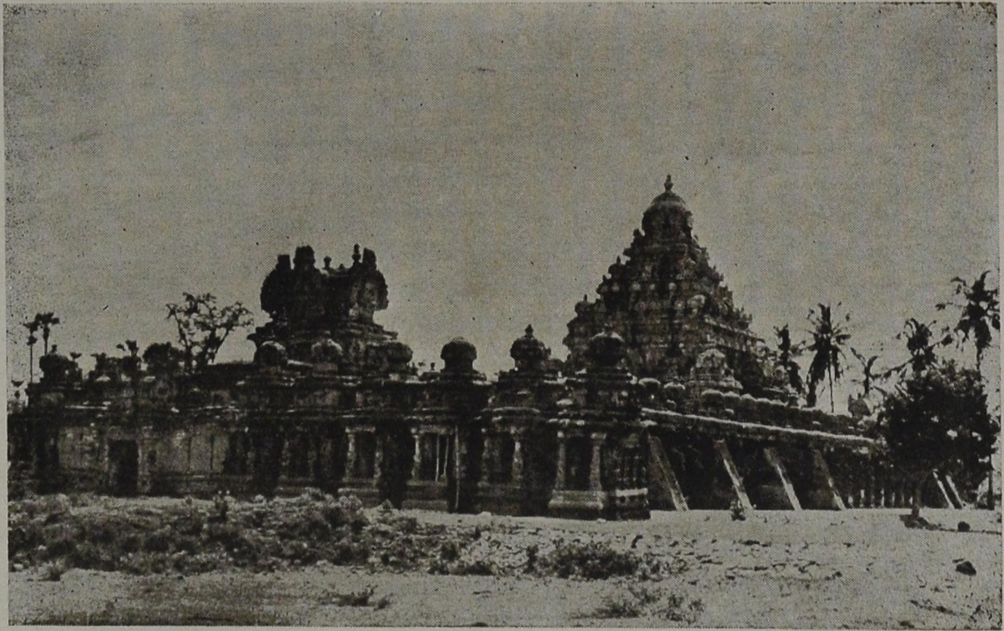
Of the three sub-shrines at the back, the one in the north-west carries a big image of Bhikshātana Siva, accompanied by *rishi patnis*. The shrine to the west at the back of the main sanctum carries an image of Gangādhara, while the sub-shrine on the north west carries an image of Tripurāntaka.

The entire outer walls of the main shrine, including the outer walls of the sub-shrines, are decorated with sculptures portraying various aspects of Siva and other deities. Thus Siva as Gauriprasāda, Dakshināmurti, Lingodhbhava, Vinādhara, Ūrdhvatāndava, Harihara, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Jyeshta, Katyāyani etc. are found on the walls

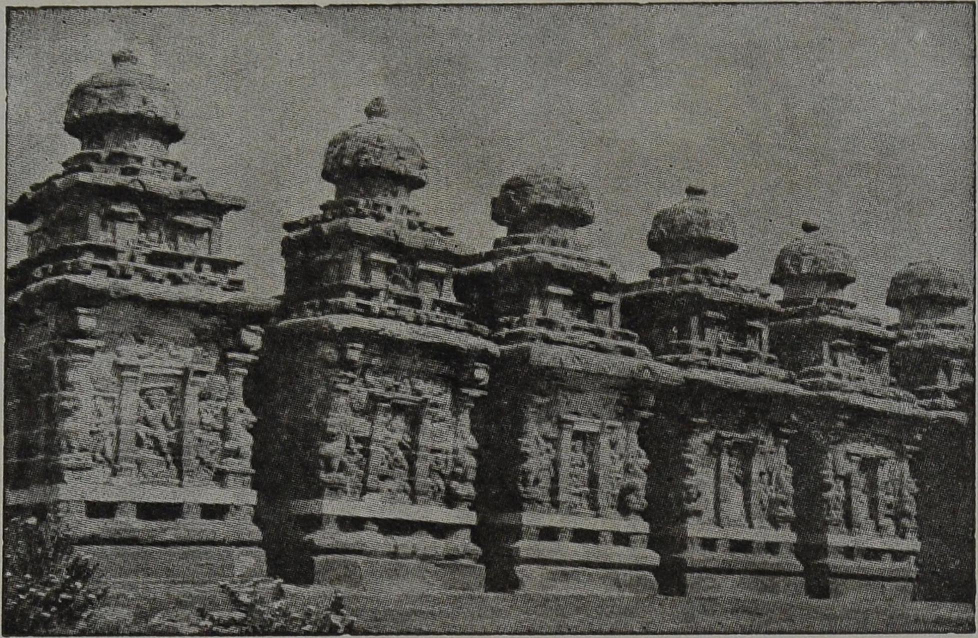
The basement, consisting of well ornamented mouldings, carries at the bottom a row of Bhutaganas, dancing in ecstasy carrying weapons. The expressions on the faces of these ganas show the mastery of the artists in handling even tiny figures.

The main tower:

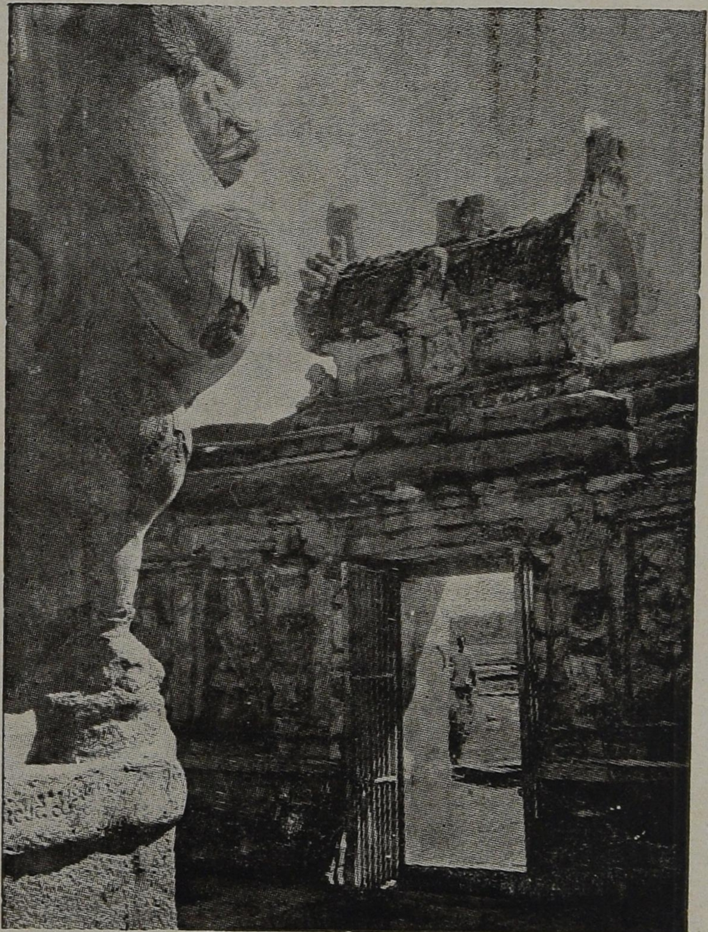
The Vimana i.e. the main tower over the sanctum, rises steadily and majestically, with rows of *salas* and *kutas*, running around the tower like garlands. The Vimana is topped by an octagonal sikhara like the Dharmarājaratha of Mamallapuram and is crowned by a stupi.



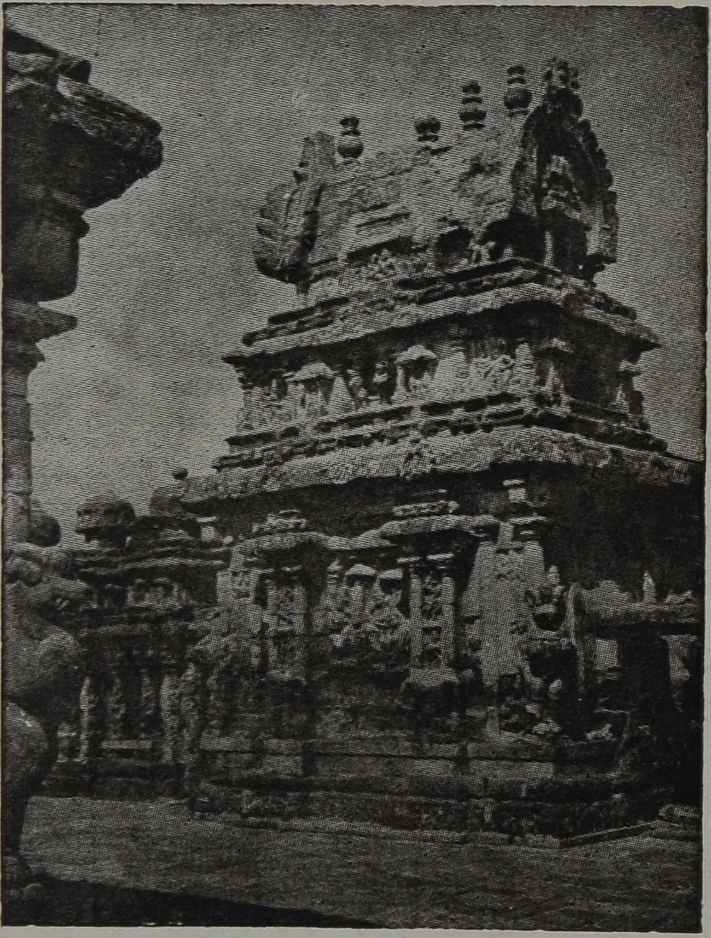
The Rājasimhesvara temple now called Kailāsanātha.



The outer shrines.



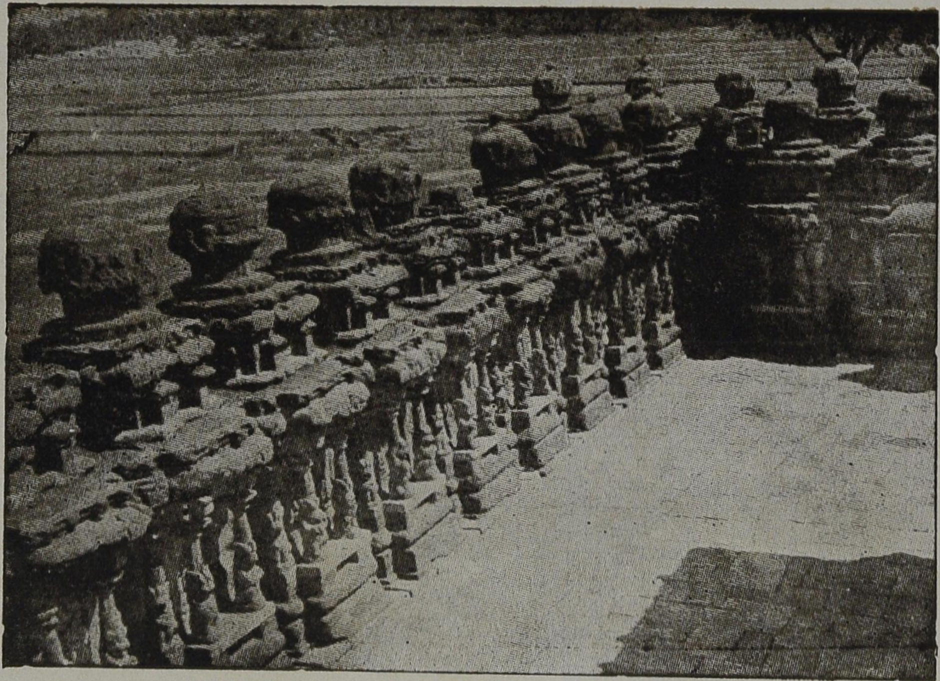
The entrance.



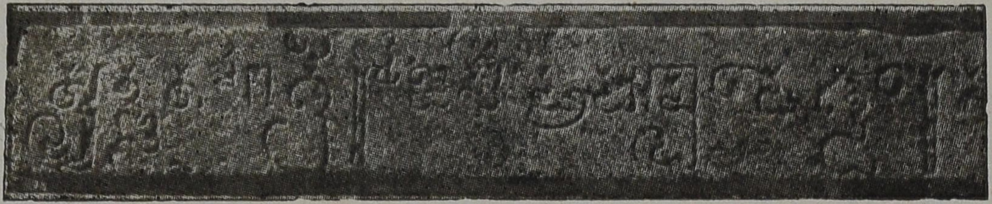
The Mahendra temple in front.

Bhikshātana Siva—inside the Mahendra temple.

Siva performing the dance of destruction—inside the Mahendra temple.

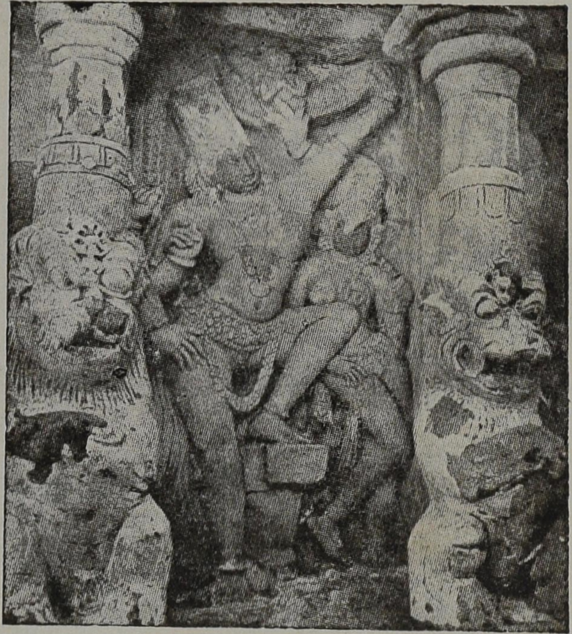


The enclosure with a row of cells.



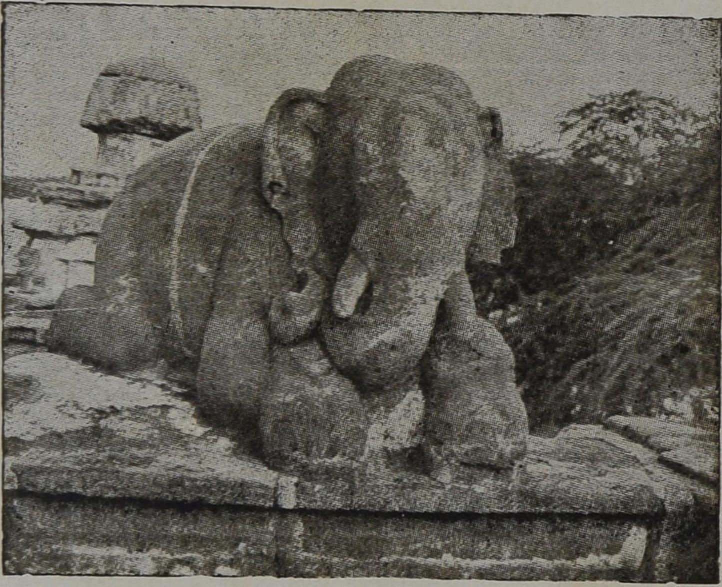
Inscription on the base of the main vimana reading Rājasimha Pallavesvaragṛham.

Titles of Rājasimha inscribed in florid grantha script

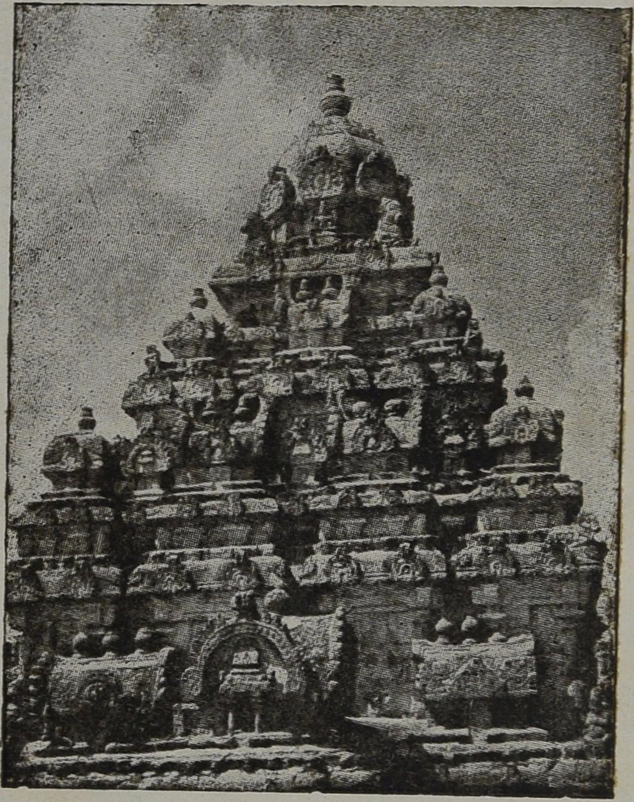


Gangādhara Siva-A sculpture in a cell of the enclosure

Gajasamhāra Siva-A sculpture in a cell of the enclosure.



An elephant on top of the enclosure wall.



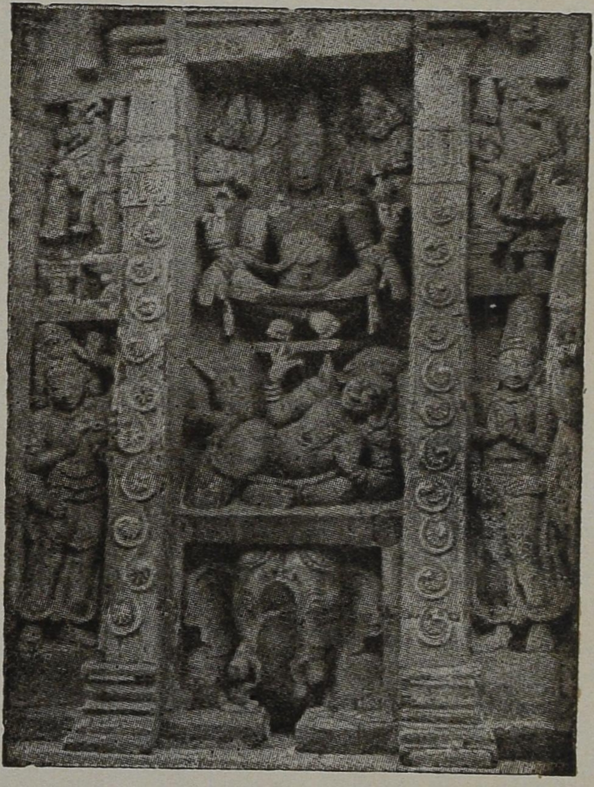
The Vimāna of the main shrine

Frieze of ganas in the base of the main shrine.

The basement of the main shrine.

Bhikshāṭana Siva–inside an anga ālaya

Durga on the North wall of the main shrine



Yoga Siva on the North wall of the main shrine

Rear view of the temple.

This elegant tower served as the model for the later vimānas of the Tamil country. In earlier times the superstructure over the sanctum was mainly built of brick and mortar, but stone has been used from base to the top in this temple. It was perhaps the loftiest stone tower in the whole of Tamilnad when it was built and was, therefore, rightly called the great stone temple ("periya thirukkarrali") in inscriptions.

Paintings:

The entire temple, including the vimāna and the prākāra, was originally painted from the base to the top. Traces of paintings were first discovered by the French savant Jouveau Dubreuil, in one of the cells. The painting depicted the Somāskanda panel with the outline and lines resembling closely the sculptures depicted in various parts of the temple. The discoverer rightly assigned the painting to the Pallava period. In recent times the chemical branch of the Central Archaeological Survey has done valuable service by exposing further paintings in various parts of the temple. Not only on the inner walls of the cell shrines but also on the sculptures, have the paintings been exposed. The paintings on the plain walls show various aspects of Siva. The recent discovery has shown two layers of paintings. The earlier layer should be taken to be coeval with the temple. It is not known when the second painting was done. It is likely that when worship was revived in the temple on a great

scale by the Vijayanagara ruler Kumara Kampana in the 14th Century A.D., the temple might have been painted for the second time.

Inscriptions :

An inscription in excellant Pallava grantha characters, on the basement, records the construction of the temple by the Pallava ruler, Rājasimha, whose lineage and other accomplishments are detailed in excellent Sanskrit poetry.

"While this prince enjoyed the whole world, which he had conquered by valour combined with polity, and in which he had killed rebels and humbled kings, he erected this extensive and wonderful house of Hara (Siva), which resembles his fame and the laughter of Hara.

" May Samkara (Siva) whose terrible ornaments are the coils of the king of serpents, and who is praised by the hosts of the kings of gods and of demons, reside for a long time in this temple (called) the holy Rājasimha-Pallavesvara !

" May the bull-marked (Siva) always lend his presence to this temple of stone, called Rājasimhesvara, which touches the clouds with its top, which robs Kailasa of its beauty, and which was built by that pious king of kings, who made all quarters obedient to his orders and (who proved) a royal lion (Rājasimha) to the dense

troops of the elephants of his daring foes!"

In addition to the dedicatory inscription on the base of the main shrine, Rājasimha has left over 300 of his titles engraved on the row of cells in the enclosure. These titles are carved in different scripts on the base of the cell shrines. Each title is repeated in four different scripts, the Nagari, simple grantha, ornate grantha and florid grantha in which letters are entwined to form designs of birds, snakes, creepers etc. Particularly the last mentioned variety engraved on the wider part of the base is a fine piece of calligraphy. These scripts show, not only the standard attained in the art of writing but also Rājasimha's love of variety. Mention has been made earlier of the Kannada inscription of Vikramāditya in the front mandapa of the temple.

Besides the inscriptions of Rājasimha and Chalukya Vikiramāditya, the temple carries a number of inscriptions of other dynasties like the imperial Cholas and the Vijayanagara rulers. No grant of the Pallavas who ruled subsequent to the builder till about 850 AD is found in this temple.

Imperial Chola inscriptions ranging from the reign of Parantaka I (907 to 955) to that of Kulottunga III have been found, recording mainly gifts of lands, gold etc., for purposes of worship. In the reign of Parāntaka I a certain Chanda Parākrama Vīra, a general, made provision for burning perpetual lamps in the

temple.

The greatest of the Chola emperors, Rajaraja I, the builder of the great temple of Tanjore and his son, Rajendra I, who erected the temple at Gangaikonda-cholapuram, are represented by epigraphs in this temple. Their royal charters refer to gifts of gold for measuring paddy etc to the temple, for offerings and for provisions of other gifts.

The closing years of Kulottunga III, the last of the great Chola rulers, were full of troubles. During his reign, the Rājasimhesvara temple seems to have suffered a setback; the lands and other properties of the temple were transferred to a nearby temple. This fact is recorded in an inscription of the Vijayanagara ruler Kumāra Kampana.

The Vijayanagara kingdom was established to preserve Hindu culture from the onslaught of the Muslim invaders. Kumāra Kampana, marched south upto Rāmeswaram and integrated the entire south with the Vijayanagara empire. He first paid attention in the conquered territories to the Hindu temples which were restored to their original glory. The Rāja-simhesvara temple received his benefactions. Enquiry by Koppanangal, an officer of Kampana revealed that the properties of the Kailāsanātha had been transfer-red to a nearby temple. This was considered an im-pious act. The entire properties were immediately res-

tored and worship instituted. It is possible that during this period, the temple was painted for the second time.

Though no record of the subsequent periods has survived, the temple continued to play an important role in the history of Kanchi.

Sculptures :

I. Sculptures in the front enclosure around the Mahēndra shrine.

South of the entrance.

1. Dvārapāla.
2. Siva.
3. Siva.
4. Agastya.
5. Durga.
6. Brahma with Sarasvati.
7. Dvādasa Ādityas.
8. Kātyāyani.

North of the entrance.

1. Dvārapāla.
2. Siva.
3. Siva.
4. Lakshmi.
5. Ganēsa.
6. Vishṇu with Sri.

7. Ekādasa Rudra.
8. Lakshmi.

A loose sculpture in front of Ganēsa represents Ardhanārı.

II. Sculptures ın the maın enclosure.

As the vısıtor goes around the prākāra in pradakshina (clockwıse) he may notice the row of cells bearing serıal numbers on the base. These numbers are retaıned here for easy guıdance.

1. Sōmāskanda.
2. Sōmāskanda.
3. Sōmāskanda.
   Padadēvata representıng Agni wıth consort.
4. Ganēsa.
5. Durga.
6. Subrahmanya.
7. Dēvı seated.
8. Trıpurāntaka.
9. Vıshṇu on Garuḍa.
10. Narasıṁha fighting wıth Garuḍa.
11. Vishṇu.
12. Trıvıkrama.
    Padadēvata represntıng Yama wıth consort.
13. Vıshṇu supporting manṭara durıng Amṛta madana.
14. Sıva Tāṇḍava.
15. Sıva as Brahma sırascheda mūrti.

16. Fight between Kriāta and Arjuna.
17. Yōgesamurti.
18. Jalandhara Vadha.
19. Destruction of Daksha yāga.
Jyēshṭa on the wall of the enclosure.
20. Brahma seated with consort.
Durga on the wall of the enclosure.
21. Tripurasamhāra.
Sapta māta on the wall of the enclosure.
22. Kālasaṁhara.
Bhairavi on the wall of enclosure.
23. Gajasaṁhara.
Agastya on the wall of the enclosure.
24. Gaṅgādhara.
25. Ūrdhva tāṇḍava.
26. Sōmāskanda.
27. Sōmāskanda.
28. Sōmāskanda.
29. Sōmāskanda.
West Gopura entrance.
30. Sōmāskanda.
31. Sōmāskanda.
32. Sōmāskanda.
33. Sōmāskanda.
34. Plain wall.
35. Candēsānugrhamurti.
36. Siva and Pārvati.
37. Yōga Dakshiṇāmurti.

Ekādasa Rudra on the wall of the enclosure.
Saraswati on the side wall.

38. Saṁhāra Tāṇḍava.
39. Vishṇu with Srı and Bhu.
    Trivıkrama on the Sıde wall.
40. Brahma-Aṇugrha Siva.
41. Indra-Aṇugraha Siva.
42. Rāvaṇa Aṇugraha Siva.
43. Vishṇu-Aṇugraha Siva.
44. Kalyāna sundara.
45. Umāmahēsvara.
    Padadēvata representing Sōma with consort.
46. Tāṇḍava probably representıng Vishā-paharana.
47. Kāma-Aṇugraha Siva.
48. Vīṇādhara.
49. Lıṇghōdhbhava.
50. Gaṅgādhara.
51. Sōmāskanda.
52. Bhairava.
53. Bhıkshāṭana.
54. Rāvaṇa and Vālı Worshipping Atmalıṇga.
    Padadēvata representing Īsāna.
55. Caṇdıkēsvara.
    Sɔmāskanda.
    A loose sculpture in front represents Caṇḍikēsvara.
56. Sōmāskanda.

57. Sōmāskanda.
58. Sōmāskanda.

III. Sculptures in the front mandapa.

South side.

1. Lakshmi.
2. Sarasvati.

North side.

1. Durga.
2. Jyēsṭha.

IV. Sculptures on the main walls of the sanctum, as one goes around in pradakshina.

1. Gauriprasāda.
2. Sarasvati.
3. Umāmahēsvara.
4. Lakshmi.
5. Yōga Dakshiṅāmurti.
6. Harihara.
7. Liṅgōdhbhava.
8. Bhikshāṭanar.
9. Sandhyā Tāṇḍava.
10. Saṁhāra Tāṇḍava.
11. Gaṇēsa.
12. Vīṇādhara.
13. Ūrdhva Tāṇḍava.
14. Kālasaṁhāra.
15. Simhavāhini.

16. Tripurasaṁhāra.
17. Bhairavi.
18. Bhairava.
19. Yogesamūrti.
20. Kausikī.
21. Durga.
22. Jyēshṭa.
23. Gaṅgādhara

Traditional Architecture :

The texts dealing with the lay-out and construction of temples and the mode of worship are called Āgamas. The construction of temples was designed to meet the needs of religious rites and so the science of architecture was an integral part of the Āgamic texts.

The earliest Āgamas, like Kāmikāgama, devote considerable attention to the lay-out and construction of temples and residences before detailing the mode of rites. As specialisation crept in, the architectural science came to be specially treated as Vāstu Sāstra, which included the science of sculpture. Later sculpture was separated and came in for special treatment under the title of Silpa texts.

That specialised treatises on architecture and mode of rites existed in Tamil Nadu from very early times is proved by references in the Sangam classics. The Pathupāttu refers to the evening worship, while the

Paripādal makes specific references to experts in the science of temple rites. ("Viri nul antanar Vilavu todanga"). Sangam works are assigned from the third century B.C. to the second century A.D. The complete mode of temple rites is referred to in a copper plate charter of Pallava Parameswaravarman I (7th Cen. AD).

Sangam classics also refer to experts in architecture. The Chera king, Senguttuvan, employed experts in temple architecture ("Melor Vilaiyum Nul ari Mākkal") to build the temple of Kannagi. An inscription dated in the reign of Pallava Dantivarman (800 AD) found in the Sundaravarada Perumal temple of Uttaramerur states that the temple was built as enjoined in the āgamas, and that it shone as a resplendent sun among Vāstus ("yo Vāstuno Bhāskara"). This clearly establishes that a temple was called Vāstu and that its construction was based on āgamic texts long before the Pallavas.

Technically Vāstu means the prepared plan of the site. It is square generally, but can be converted into other forms and still retain its symbolism. It is said to represent the conditioned manifestation of the Supreme Purusha. So it is generally called Vāstu Purusha

The shape of the Vāstu for gods is square. "The square with reference to the level of the earth is the graph of the pair of opposites, initially marked by sunrise and sunset, and caused by the daily apparent move-

ment of the sun. These successive movements are given permanence by the symbol of the square". The Nadunal Vādai, a Sangam work, refers to the preparation of a building site in relation to the movement of the sun.

Two types of square diagrams (called Vāstu mandala), consisting either of 64 or 81 equal squares, are principally recognised in laying out a temple. The former is called Manduka pada, and the later Paramasāyi pada.

A temple built in the Paramasāyi pada, with 81 squares, is considered suitable for worship by kings. The central square of this lay-out is assigned to Brahma, and the outermost squares to thirty-two deities. The thirty-two Deities include the eight dikpālas, Indra, Agni, Yama, Niruriti, Varuna, Vāyu, Soma and Īsāna. They are assigned in order to the eight quarters of the directions beginning from the east. Thus Indra is assigned to the east. Agni to the south-east. Yama to the south, Niruriti to south-west, Varuna to the west, Vāyu to north-west, Soma to the north and Īsāna to the north-east. The intervening squares of the mandala are assigned to the twelve Ādityas (solar deities). These vāstu pada devatas are said to constitute the "sarira" (body) of the Vāstupurusha.

Besides these Vāstupada devatas there are subsidiary deities in temples generally called parivara

devatas who include Ganesa, Durga, Subrahmanya, Brahma, the Saptamātas, Kāli, Agastya, the eleven Rudras and Brahma. In a Siva temple, Vishnu is a subsidiary deity, while in a Vishnu temple Siva occupies that position. Nandi or Garuda, the āyudhas and the Dvārapālas are also the subsidiary deities.

The vertical section of a temple is proportionate to the ground plan and so the entire lay-out of a temple which includes not only the ground plan of the vimāna but also the prākara is carefully planned before the temple is erected. Besides the main deity, the Parivāra devatas and the Vāstu devatas are entitled to regular offerings. The vāstumandala concept is fully developped in the Kailāsanātha temple of Kanchi, which is one of the earliest surviving temples of Tamil Nadu.

Kailāsanātha temple is the earliest suviving temple retaining all its layout intact. Its sculbtures are systamatically arranged and portray vividly the episodes connected with the various manifestations of the Supreme, as depicted in the Purānas and Itihāsas. It may be mentioned that the builder of the temple styled himself *Itihāsapriya* i. e. a lover of epics. He rightly claimed, that this temple surpassed in beauty even Kailāsa, the abode of Siva. And above all this is a living temple where the Supreme deity, called Rājasimheswara is being worshiped continuosly for the past one thousand and three hundred years. It is indeed a wonderful house of Hara (Siva).

Note for Visitors :

Kanchi is about 50 miles from Madras and can be reached either by road or train. Busses are plying from Madras at regular intervals. There are good hotels at Kanchi which supply South Indian dishes.

The Kailāsanātha temple is kept open from 7-00 a.m. to 6-00 p.m. However the sanctum will remain closed from 12 noon to 4-00 p.m.

Photography is permitted without the use of stands. For taking movie, permission is however required from the Superintending Archaeologist, Southern Circle, Madras-9. The temple is maintained as a National Monument by the Central Archaeological Survey.

There are over one hundred temples in Kanchi. The following are of historic interest.

1. Ekāmranātha temple.
2. Vaikuntanātha temple.
3. Kāmākshi temple.
4. Varadarāja temple.
5. Chandra prabhā temple at Jina Kanchi.

Errata

Page	Line	for	Read
4	23	Narasimha I	Narasimha II
13	17	North	South
16	4	North	South